

God's Love Never Runs Out Psalms 136:1

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Sadly, this is the end of VBS week and what made this week great is what the children learned about God.

On the first day, they learned that God is our Creator and, as our Creator, how He crafted each of us by His ingenious design.

Then they learned about our all-knowing God. How He knows every detail of our lives, yet promises to always love us.

On day three, because of the world of unknowns in which we live, the children learned that God is their safe place. God provides a refuge, a safe place, when our doubts, worries, and fears begin to overtake us.

Yet, one of the deepest fears we carry—often unspoken—is the fear that love has limits. We worry that if we fail too much, disappoint too often, or suffer too long, the love we rely on might eventually dry up.

This is where day five's focus was so important. Human love can grow weary. Human patience can wear thin. Human grace can be exhausted.

One writer put how we feel into a short, little poem. He wrote, *"To live above with the saints we love—that will be glory. But to live below with the saints we know—now that's another story."*

This is why day four's lesson was so important, it taught that God's love is forever. The children learned that they can always look to a bright future and celebrate all God's promises when they place their trust in Jesus.

This lesson is summed up in our focal passage for the week, Psalm 136:1, *"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! His faithful love endures forever."*

Think about that passage. God's love is not like ours. His love *"endures forever;"* it never runs out.

God's not like us. We constantly run out of:

Energy – We get tired physically, emotionally, and mentally.

Patience – Especially under stress, conflict, or waiting.

Money – Bills, emergencies, and unexpected needs drain resources.

Time – There's never quite enough of it.

Words – In grief or shock, we don't know what to say.

Strength – When burdens last longer than expected.

Hope – After repeated disappointment or loss.

Answers – When prayers seem unanswered and questions remain.

Courage – Facing fear, change, or uncertainty.

Control – When life reminds us we were never fully in charge.

But we never run out of God's love for us! It's like this story that took place in a busy hospital in Chicago.

An elderly man named Mr. Peterson came every day to visit his adult son who had been in a coma for over a year after a terrible car accident.

The doctors told the father that recovery was unlikely. Unlike many families who would have visited less often as hope faded, Mr. Peterson's hope never faded.

Every morning at 9:00 a.m. he would arrive and sit beside his son's bed, hold his hand, and talk to him. He told him stories about the neighborhood. He read Scripture aloud. Sometimes he simply sat in silence.

One nurse finally asked him, *"Sir, your son hasn't responded in over a year. Why do you keep coming every day?"*

The old man smiled gently and said, *"Because he's my son. He may not know I'm here—but I know I am and my love for him doesn't depend on his response. It depends on my heart."*

Weeks later, something unexpected happened. The son's fingers twitched. Then his eyes opened. Slowly, miraculously, he began to recover.

When he could finally speak, his first words to his father were, *“Dad... were you here all this time?”* With tears in his eyes, the father answered, *“Every single day.”*

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That story is a picture of God’s love for us. There are seasons when we’re unresponsive. Seasons when we wander. Seasons when we’re spiritually distant, but God never stops coming.

He never stops loving. He never stops waiting. God’s love doesn’t run out when we fail. It doesn’t run out when we doubt. It doesn’t run out when we fall. He’s there. Every day. Waiting. Loving.

How can God do this, because God’s love is not measured by our performance; it’s His idea. Listen to the beginning of Psalm 136.

*“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.
His love endures forever.*

*Give thanks to the God of gods.
His love endures forever.*

*Give thanks to the Lord of lords:
His love endures forever.”*

This phrase, *“His love endures forever,”* is repeated twenty-six times because God wants to drill this truth into our hearts.

This psalm recounts Israel’s story. Every verse reminds God’s people of their creation, deliverance, wilderness wandering, failure, and restoration and after every moment comes the same refrain, *“His love endures forever.”*

God’s love didn’t stop when Israel complained. It didn’t run out when they sinned. It didn’t fade when they doubted. Why? Because God’s love is rooted in who He is, not in what we do.

Many believers live as though God's affection rises and falls with their obedience. We imagine a spiritual fuel gauge; when we pray more, love is full; when we fail, the needle drops. But Scripture tells a different story.

Romans 5:8, *"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

God didn't wait for us to improve before He loved us. He loved us at our worst and that love has never changed.

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Following the death of his wife, C. S. Lewis wrote a short book recounting his reflections on his experience of bereavement called *A Grief Observed*.

This book was not a sign that he had lost his faith in God, but it was used by Lewis to vent and explore his grief. He illustrates the everyday trials of life without his wife and explores fundamental questions of faith

In this book he wrote, *"But go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting and double-bolting on the inside."*

C. S. Lewis hadn't lose his faith, he was venting and there's nothing wrong with this. We're human. There are seasons when prayers feel unanswered, when healing doesn't come, when doors close instead of open.

In those moments, it's easy to wonder, *"Has God grown tired of me? Has His love finally run out?"* The cross answers that question forever.

At the cross, Jesus experienced abandonment, suffering, and silence, not because the Father's love had failed, but because love was being poured out to the very end.

Jesus Himself said in John 13:1b, *"Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end."*

God's love did not stop at the edge of suffering; it went straight through it.

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Human love often depends on strength, energy, and reciprocity (re-ci-pros-i-ty). God's love doesn't.

In 1 Kings 19, after showing the 450 priests of Baal the power of almighty God, Elijah ran away fearing the wrath of Ahab.

When he could run no longer, Elijah collapsed from exhaustion and despair, believing his ministry was over, but God didn't rebuke him. God fed him, let him sleep, and gently reminded him that he wasn't finished.

When Peter denied Jesus three times, Jesus didn't discard him. He restored him. When the prodigal son came home rehearsing an apology, the father ran to meet him before a word was spoken.

Why? This is the way God's love operates. His love never runs out. God tells us in Joel 2:25, *"I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten."*

This is reinforced in Lamentations 3:22–23a, *"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning."*

You may be tired. You may feel used up. You may feel like you have nothing left to give, but God's love is not depleted by your weakness. In fact, that's often where it shines brightest.

There was an older athlete in his 70s who loved running marathons. He wasn't fast, in fact, he was one of the last to finish each race, but he ran every step with joy.

One year, in a particularly hilly marathon, the weather turned cold and rainy. Many runners bowed out early. By mile 20, most of the crowd cheered for the leaders at the front of the pack; very few stayed to watch the back of the race.

At mile 24, the elderly runner was still on the course, slow, tired, and soaked to the bone. A young spectator on the sidelines shouted, *“You’re almost finished! Keep going, you’ve got this!”*

When the runner crossed the finish line, the same spectator asked him, *“How do you do it? Why do you keep going at your age when others don’t?”*

The older man smiled and said, *“I don’t run to win. I run so I won’t quit. I run to finish what I started,”* but then he added something even deeper.

“Every step I take, I know there’s someone waiting at the finish line — cheering, smiling, and proud that I made it.”

He didn’t run alone. He ran supported by something greater than his own strength. In life, we’re like that marathon runner. We don’t always run fast. We get fatigued. The course is harder than we expected.

Sometimes it feels like everyone else is ahead while we struggle to take another step. In those moments we might think: *“I can’t do this,”* or *“I’m too broken,”* or *“I’m so far behind.”*

But the Christian truth is this: God’s love doesn’t quit on us halfway through the race. His love carries us to the finish line, not because we’re strong, but because He never stops loving us.

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Conclusion

The children learned this important truth this past week. God doesn’t just cheer us on from a distance. His love literally carries us — moment by moment, breath by breath when we can’t carry ourselves.

In Philippians 1:6, Paul writes, *“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”*

The same love that saved us is the love that will sustain us. God doesn't abandon unfinished work. His love is not seasonal, emotional, or conditional. It's covenantal, faithful, and enduring.

Nothing... failure, suffering, loss, or even death, can exhaust it. Romans 8:38–39, *“Neither death nor life... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

God's love isn't measured by our faithfulness to Him, but by His faithfulness to us. God's love never runs out.

As we close on another great VBS, let's keep in our hearts what the psalmist wrote in Psalm 136:1, *“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! His faithful love endures forever.”*